



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

1400 South 19th Avenue
Bozeman, MT 59718

January 6, 2016

To: FWP Region 3 EA Standard Distribution List
Big Hole Watershed Committee, Box 21, Divide, MT 59727
Montana Trout Unlimited, P.O. Box 7186, Missoula, MT 59807
Dan Vermillion, FWP Commissioner, 13 Kindsfather Dr., Livingston MT 59047
Earnest and Colleen Bacon, 2215 Fishtrap Creek Road, Wisdom, MT 59761
Dept. of Natural Resources and Conservation, 730 N. Montana Street, Dillon, MT 59725-9424
George Grant Chapter of Trout Unlimited, P.O. Box 563, Butte, MT 59703
Skyline Sportsmen, P.O. Box 173, Butte, MT 59703
Anaconda Sportsmen, 2 Cherry, Anaconda, MT 59711

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The enclosed Decision Notice has been prepared for improvements to the 12-acre Salmon Fly Fishing Access Site (FAS), which has been a popular recreational site since its acquisition by Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks (FWP) in 1985. The FAS is located along the Big Hole River 1 mile south of Melrose, Montana. The site provides quality recreational opportunities for fishing, boating, floating and camping.

Based on the Environmental Assessment, public comment, and FWP evaluation, it is my decision to proceed with the proposed action, Alternative B, as described in the Salmon Fly Fishing Access Site Proposed Improvement Draft Environmental Assessment. This alternative updates and improves existing facilities within the FAS.

Questions regarding this Decision Notice should be directed to:

Ray Heagney
Fishing Access Site Manager
1400 S. 19th Ave
Bozeman, MT 59718
406-994-6987
Or emailed to : rheagney@mt.gov

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

Sam B. Sheppard
Region Three Supervisor



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

1400 South 19th Ave
Bozeman, MT 59718

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT DECISION NOTICE

SALMON FLY FISHING ACCESS SITE PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT PROJECT DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

**Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Region Three, Bozeman
January, 6th 2016**

Proposed Action

The 12-acre Salmon Fly Fishing Access Site (FAS) has been a popular recreational site along the Big Hole River since its acquisition by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) in 1985 and provides quality recreational opportunities for fishing, boating, floating, camping, picnicking, and wildlife viewing.

In an effort to accommodate heavy public use and improve recreational facilities at the FAS, FWP proposes to improve parking and camping facilities at Salmon Fly FAS. Proposed improvements include expanding and improving the parking area, stabilizing the riverbank, expanding the campground, and constructing a new camp loop road.

Montana Environmental Policy Act

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is required by the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) to assess significant potential impacts of a proposed action to the human and physical environment. In compliance with MEPA, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed for the proposed project by FWP and released for public comment on November 30, 2015.

Public comments on the proposed project were taken from November 30, 2015 through December 31, 2015. The EA was mailed to 63 groups and individuals.

Summary of Public Comment

FWP received two (2) comments regarding the proposed action during the 30-day public comment period; both comments expressed support, however one comment added "that the size of this project does not seem justified by the overall use of the site."

FWP Response: FWP recognizes that there are periods of high fishing related activity during the Salmon Fly hatch; however a general trend throughout the region indicates an increase in general recreation and camping, with Salmon Fly FAS historically being a popular site for camping. This project in part is anticipating these trends and hardening site facilities to meet future recreational demands.

No Comment opposing the proposed project.

Decision

Based on the Environmental Assessment, public comment, and FWP evaluation, it is my decision to proceed with the proposed action, Alternative B, as described in the Salmon Fly Fishing Access Site Proposed Improvement Draft Environmental Assessment. This alternative updates and improves existing facilities in the FAS.

Appeal

This project is subject to appeal, which must be submitted to the FWP Director (Mr. Jeff Hagener, Director, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, PO Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701) in writing and postmarked within 30 days of the date on this decision notice. The appeal must specifically describe the basis for the appeal, explain how the appellant has previously commented to the department or participated in the decision-making process, and lay out how FWP may address the concerns in the appeal. If you have questions regarding this decision notice, please contact Ray Heagney, Fishing Access Site Manager at 406-994-6987.



Sam B. Sheppard
Region Three Supervisor
